

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Slap and Palm, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of myself located in Easton CT, I write to ask you to support Raised House Bill 5291, An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways, and Recreational Trails.

This important bill would increase the bond authorization for the Recreational Trails and Greenways Grants program to \$6 million. In Fall 2021 DEEP issued a request for recreational trails proposals with only \$3 million available. It received 65 applications requesting over \$22 million, of which the highly ranked proposals alone totaled over \$7 million. Although \$3 million was granted to twenty worthy projects, we expect the ongoing need for investments in Connecticut's outdoor recreation infrastructure to continue.

Today's modern society is constantly criticized for being too digital and as a result people, especially youth, not getting enough exposure outdoors. The recent pandemic not only exposed this, but also helped many people pick up healthy hobbies outdoors. This bill to increase the bond would greatly contribute to the well being of CT citizens (both mentally & physically), local athletic businesses, and preserve the beauty of Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,
Keegan McNamara